



Department of Justice

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TROY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ATTEMPTING TO ENTICE A MINOR TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTS

Defendant Used his Cellular Telephone to Attempt to Arrange a Sexual Encounter with a Twelve-Year-Old Girl

ALBANY, NEW YORK — MICHAEL HEPPELLE, age 42, of Troy, New York, pled guilty today in Albany before Chief United States District Court Judge Gary L. Sharpe to one count of attempted online enticement of a minor, announced United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian and Andrew W. Vale, Special Agent-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Albany Division. HEPPELLE faces a mandatory minimum sentence of at least ten years of imprisonment and up to a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. HEPPELLE was detained pending his sentencing.

Pursuant to a written plea agreement, HEPPELLE admitted that between approximately September 24, 2012 and October 3, 2012, he called a cooperating witness and offered to pay \$500 if the cooperating witness could arrange for HEPPELLE to have a sexual encounter with a twelve-year-old girl. The cooperating witness reported his/her concerns to law enforcement, who in turn, told the cooperating witness to tell HEPPELLE that if he was serious about engaging in sexual acts with the twelve-year-old girl, he could meet her on October 3, 2012 at a particular time, at a pre-arranged location in Rensselaer County. On October 3, 2012, HEPPELLE arrived at the pre-arranged location at the pre-determined time to meet with and engage in sexual acts with the girl. HEPPELLE was then arrested and was found to be in

possession of \$500 in U.S. currency, a cellular telephone, two condoms, and a lubricant typically used during sexual intercourse.

Sentencing is scheduled for January 21, 2014, at 9:00 a.m. in Albany, New York. This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Rick Belliss.

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